

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
HOUSE JUDICIARY STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 31, 2023

1:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Sarah Vance, Chair  
Representative Jamie Allard, Vice Chair  
Representative Ben Carpenter  
Representative Craig Johnson  
Representative David Eastman  
Representative Andrew Gray

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Cliff Groh

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

HOUSE BILL NO. 98

"An Act relating to state ownership of submerged land underlying navigable water within the boundaries of and adjacent to federal areas; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED HB 98 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 68

"An Act relating to sex trafficking; establishing the crime of patron of a victim of sex trafficking; relating to the crime of human trafficking; relating to prostitution; relating to sentencing for sex trafficking, patron of a victim of sex trafficking, and human trafficking; establishing the process for vacating judgments for certain convictions of prostitution and misconduct involving a controlled substance; relating to the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault; relating to permanent fund dividends for certain individuals whose convictions are vacated; and providing for an effective date."

- SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: HB 98

SHORT TITLE: STATE OWNERSHIP OF SUBMERGED LAND

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) SADDLER

03/06/23 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
03/06/23 (H) JUD, RES  
03/29/23 (H) JUD AT 1:00 PM GRUENBERG 120  
03/29/23 (H) Heard & Held  
03/29/23 (H) MINUTE (JUD)  
03/31/23 (H) JUD AT 1:00 PM GRUENBERG 120

#### **WITNESS REGISTER**

REPRESENTATIVE DAN SADDLER  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** As prime sponsor, offered brief introductory remarks during the hearing on HB 98.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[1:00:26 PM](#)

**CHAIR SARAH VANCE** called the House Judiciary Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Representatives Carpenter, Gray, and Vance were present at the call to order. Representatives Eastman and C. Johnson arrived as the meeting was in progress.

The committee took an at-ease from 1:00 p.m. to 1:05 p.m.

#### **HB 98-STATE OWNERSHIP OF SUBMERGED LAND**

[1:05:17 PM](#)

CHAIR VANCE announced that the only order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 98, "An Act relating to state ownership of submerged land underlying navigable water within the boundaries of and adjacent to federal areas; and providing for an effective date."

[1:05:34 PM](#)

CHAIR VANCE opened public testimony on HB 98. After ascertaining there was no one who wished to testify, she introduced the bill sponsor.

[1:06:53 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DAN SADDLER, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor of HB 98, offered brief introductory remarks.

CHAIR VANCE invited questions from members of the committee.

[1:07:23 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE EASTMAN inquired about efforts to bring western states on board with the proposal.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER said there had been no effort to reach out to western states; nonetheless, he acknowledged several legislative forums and legal organizations that would be watching the outcome. He anticipated that other states would be encouraged by the outcome as well.

REPRESENTATIVE EASTMAN shared his understanding that the bill was being put forward as one step "in a larger chess game." He asked what the next steps would be, should the bill pass.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER indicated that the next steps would be continued litigation on cases in which Alaska was in the right. Additionally, the continued exploration on the outer limits of navigability, which would be reflected in the annual report provided to the legislature as part of the proposed legislation.

[1:10:13 PM](#)

CHAIR VANCE invited final comment from the bill sponsor.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER said he had nothing further to add. He expressed his appreciation for the thorough vetting of and prompt action on the bill.

[1:11:07 PM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease.

[1:13:20 PM](#)

CHAIR VANCE closed public testimony on HB 98.

[1:13:35 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE ALLARD moved to report HB 98 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes and to grant Legislative Legal Services the authority to make technical and conforming changes. There being no objection, HB 98 was reported out of the House Judiciary Standing Committee.

1:14:43 PM

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Judiciary Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 1:14 p.m.